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**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**CERI GOVERNING BOARD**

**International Life Skills Survey**

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE  
PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP**

**14 January 2000**

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**International Life Skills Survey Project Advisory Group**  
**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> MEETING**

**ITEM 1: ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA**

1. The Chair, Mr. Jean-Pierre Voyer, outlined the purposes of the meeting as i) to take stock of development of the survey to date; ii) to clarify deadlines for the particular forthcoming stages of the work; and iii) to situate the survey in the broader framework of OECD surveys of competence in school-age and adult populations.

2. The meeting adopted the draft agenda [DEELSA/ELSA/ED/CERI/CD/ILSS/A(2000)1] with the following amendments:

- insertion of a new item 4: Update on country participation in which the UK representatives would report on their feasibility study and all countries would be invited to report on their current plans regarding participation;
- deletion of the current item 5: Report on the European Commission's Review of the International Adult Literacy Survey on the grounds that the report was not yet available;
- insertion of a new item 7: Costs;
- insertion of a new item 8: Consideration of change of name for survey.

**ITEM 2: APPROVAL OF THE SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING, 16 June 1999**

3. The meeting approved the Summary Record [DEELSA/ELSA/ED/CERI/CD/ILSS/M(99)1].

**ITEM 3: REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TESTS**

4. In introducing this item, Mr. Scott Murray, Statistics Canada, said that the survey was intended to focus on domains for which there were:

- good theory regarding competence in the domain;
- a history of measurement and data gathering on the basis of which psychometrically robust measures could be developed; and
- compact measurement of a type that would be feasible in a household survey.

**Prose and document literacy**

5. Mr. Murray and Mr. Yvan Clermont, Statistics Canada, reported on development of the literacy measures:

- a revised framework paper has been prepared, incorporating findings of the Second International Adult Literacy Survey (SIALS);
- the process of item development put in place to yield linguistic, cultural and geographic representation has been successful, with:
  - a first round of development undertaken through a network of networks put in place in May 1999 and consisting of the following:
    - Eastern European network
      - Hungary
    - South American network
      - Chile
      - Venezuela
      - Mexico
      - Costa-Rica
    - French-Italian network
      - Switzerland (French)
      - Belgium (French)
      - Italy
    - Scandinavian network
      - Norway
      - Denmark
      - Sweden
      - Latvia
    - Portugal
    - Canada (English)
    - China
  - a second round which the following additional participants joined in November 1999, after the first meeting of National Study Managers:
    - Austria
    - Canada (French)
    - Czech Republic
    - Germany
    - Hungary (second participant)
    - Italy (second participant)
    - Luxembourg
    - Netherlands
    - Sweden (second and third participant)
    - Swiss (German)
    - United States
  - each individual participant asked to produce items based on an average total of 5 stimuli for each prose and document literacy, potentially yielding more than a hundred stimuli for each; and
  - items received to date from participants in Austria, Belgium (French), Chile, Costa-Rica, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Swiss (French), Swiss (German) and Venezuela;
- a revision meeting to be called when the materials are ready for review and with the process expected to be completed by June 2000.

## Numeracy

6. Mr. Murray and Mr. Clermont reported on development of the numeracy measure:

- the framework for numeracy:
  - will be revised by March 2000 following a review by a group of 16 experts from Australia (3), Ireland, Canada, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands (2), Sweden, United Kingdom (2), United States (4);
  - appears, from feasibility testing with numeracy items to date, to predicts task difficulty as well as do the longer established frameworks for prose and document literacy;
  - overlaps conceptually with some part of the document literacy scale, so the degree and nature of this overlap will be explored with the pilot data;
- many high quality items currently exist to support creation of the pilot test, with:
  - 80 developed by Australia, the Netherlands, Israel and the US, tested with a sample of more than 700 respondents in the Netherlands and the US, yielding 68 with good psychometric properties though not yet enough and not yet with sufficient coverage of all facets of the framework;
  - further items being developed by representatives from Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Sweden following the first meeting of National Study Managers, in preparation for a second mini-feasibility study with 30 items in January 2000 in the Netherlands and the US;

## Problem solving

7. Mr. Murray and Mr. Clermont reported on development of the problem solving measure:

- the framework for the scale has been developed:
  - the German developers are clarifying the theoretical rationale for proficiency levels and the descriptions that will be used for each;
  - the framework covers only a limited domain within problem solving, presenting tasks or projects, as the problems so the international management team recommends that the title of the scale be changed from *Problem Solving* to *Analytic Reasoning* to provide a better description of its coverage;
  - feasibility testing in Germany has confirmed operational viability of the framework and establishes that assessment materials produced in reference to it meet the high psychometric standards for validity, comparability and reliability set within ILSS;
- in the development of the assessment materials:
  - eight different projects have been developed, each consisting of several tasks that each take about 20 minutes to address;
  - some design work is being undertaken to simplify scoring;
  - feasibility testing has been completed with all in Germany and with some in the US;
  - preliminary findings indicate that:
    - . the approach to measurement is viable cross-nationally but only if the amount of testing time per respondent is doubled;
    - . the proposed tasks are heavily dependent on reading;
    - . the cognitive load of the tasks is high and may have an impact on the level of engagement of respondents and their propensity to complete all assessments;

- data from the pilot survey will be used:
  - to document the degree of overlap with the prose document and numeracy scales and to explore the degree to which low literacy proficiency restricts measurement;
  - to assess what impact the high cognitive load of the problem solving measures has on response rates.

8. In discussion of the report on the current developments with the problem-solving instrument, concern was expressed about the impact of the proposed doubling of the time required for testing. It was recognised that the total time of assessment for individuals would not be altered but that observed that doubling the time for problem solving would either crowd out other things or remove any capacity to reduce the total time of testing and thus the sample size and the cost of the survey.

9. There was also concern that the project method adopted had limitations. One was its heavy dependence on reading and the potential difficulties for people with low literacy skills who might be good problem solvers. The other was that the tasks presented might not be ‘problems’ for the participants but rather artificial, even if interesting, tasks. Mr. Jean-Paul Reeffer reported that he had had reservations about the content of the proposed test but that these had been overcome by an inspection of the actual tasks being presented and data on the performance of respondents in the feasibility study.

10. On the issue of title for the test, there was some concern that the use of the narrower title, *Analytical Reasoning*, would not signal adequately the domain which it was intended to be measuring. Others felt that the principle of ‘truth in advertising’ necessitated the use of the narrower title to describe what would actually be tested.

## **Practical cognition**

11. Mr. Murray and Mr. Clermont reported that:

- analysis of feasibility data for Spain and the US indicates that, while the approach to measurement provides interesting results, the method of scoring will not sustain meaningful international comparisons;
- the International Management Team recommends that this scale be dropped from ILSS;
- the US NCES has agreed to support further development of this scale outside ILSS.

## **Teamwork**

12. Mr. Murray and Mr. Clermont reported that:

- work by the US National Center for Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST) and the American Institutes of Research (AIR) has established that the theoretical framework is legitimate;
- analysis of data from two feasibility studies suggests that *direct* measurement in a household survey is unable to provide data of sufficient quality;

- US, Canadian and Swedish experts are working to develop behavioural measures, focusing on incidence, frequency, complexity and saliency in multiple life domains, to provide an *indirect* assessment of teamwork, collected as part of the background questionnaire.

### ICT literacy

13. Mr. Murray and Mr. Clermont reported that:

- a European network, chaired by Luxembourg, is progressing towards an improved theoretical framework and associated approach to measurement but not in time for use in ILSS;
- a working group has been set up to develop behavioural measures to provide an *indirect* assessment collected as part of the background questionnaire.

14. In discussion, several participants expressed disappointment that information on *teamwork* and *ICT literacy* would now be gathered through indirect and not direct measurement. It was recognised that the behavioural questions proposed could work better cross-nationally than attitude measures but there was concern that the measures were, nevertheless, limited and that the proposal to gather the information through the *background questionnaire* would limit the extent to which other crucial information could be obtained in that questionnaire. It was pointed out that including them in the background questionnaire would require all participants to answer all of the questions and preclude the possibility of questions for these domains being rotated, with reduced time of response for individuals, as they would have been if direct measurement were still planned.

15. In response, Mr. Murray acknowledged that the measures now proposed were smaller in scope than those originally envisaged but pointed out that no one had yet obtained direct measures in these domains in a household survey and that work to date within ILSS had not provided the means to achieve that goal. He emphasised that the indirect measures would be behavioural in their focus and not seek individuals' estimates of their skills. He noted that earlier work had revealed that opinions of skills are dependent on occupational demands. For example, people in occupations with low literacy demands often judge that they have high literacy skills.

16. Mr Tamás Köpeczi Bócz reported that Hungary remains interested in direct measurement of teamwork and ICT literacy and a broader conception of problem solving and would seek to do national work on these fronts.

### Other measures

17. The question was asked whether consideration had been given to measuring a wider range of domains, including 'social intelligence', 'emotional intelligence' and 'knowledge capital'. Mr. Murray reported that the net had initially been cast very broadly through a series of literature reviews but that the final choice had been limited by the extent to which sufficiently strong conceptual and measurement work had yet been done in each domain to give the basis for measurement in a household survey.

18. In light of the proposal to limit the range of direct measurement to prose and document literacy, numeracy and analytical reasoning, the question of whether the range of domains assessed might be broadened in a second round of ILSS. Mr. Murray advised that, while the possibility of further rounds had been raised in earlier meetings of the Project Advisory Group, none was currently scheduled. He noted that future arrangements were the subject of a later item on the agenda.

#### ITEM 4: REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE

19. In introducing this item, Professor Albert Tuijnman outlined the objectives of ILSS as:

- development of a skill matrix for each participating country and cross-nationally;
- analysis of skill supply, including:
  - impact of skills;
  - determinants of skills;
- analysis of the importance of skill outcomes, in terms of:
  - economic development;
  - social development;
  - equity.

20. In reporting on the development of the background questionnaire, Professor Tuijnman noted:

- general information to be collected would include educational attainment, to be coded according to ISCED '97, and ISCED '77 where comparability with IALS data is required, and a revised section on immigration seeking date of arrival and language used before arrival;
- labour force information would include time worked, wages/income, an occupational measure that would capture information on the knowledge intensity of the job;
- a measure of social capital would be included;
- a brief measure of 'well-being', though not a full 'quality of life' measure, would be included to get beyond earnings as the sole outcome measure;
- reports of practices at home and at work would include information on incidence, volume, criticality, sponsor (or funder) of the activity, and medium of engagement (group, individual, electronic or other distance connection);
- specific information on participation in education and learning would be obtained;
- other information, yet to be determined, to reflect questions of policy makers would be included;
- the indirect measures of teamwork and ICT literacy would also be included.

21. Professor Tuijnman reported that Statistics Canada and Westat were currently improving the Background Questionnaire and would distribute it at the end of January 2000 for country reviews by experts and policy makers in education, labour and industry ministries.

22. Mr. Thomas Healy provided some additional information on the section of the questionnaire dealing with participation in education and learning. He said that this was drawing on work outside ILSS as well, including work in Network B of the OECD Indicators of Education Systems (INES) programme and work of EUROSTAT and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and that it was linked to more general efforts to harmonise training and learning statistics. He emphasised that there would be only a few minutes of respondents' time available for questions on the topic and that strategic choices would need to be made to ensure that information most relevant for policy analysis and research would be obtained.



23. Professor Tuijnman advised that there would be a key meeting in Ottawa on 27-29 March 2000 at which the final version of the questionnaire would be determined. He emphasised the importance of this meeting saying that it would be the occasion at which difficult decisions about priority would have to be made as there would be competing claims for coverage in the questionnaire of more material than could be included. Professor Tuijnman suggested that each national study team should send at least one participant to the meeting for which background materials will be distributed in early February to enable country representatives to consult widely at home before coming to the meeting.

24. In discussion the importance of the Background Questionnaire for policy analysis and policy development was emphasised. In this context, information that reflected the knowledge intensity of the work involved in occupations was seen to be very important. Some doubts were expressed about the feasibility of obtaining useful information on social capital given the lack of agreement about a definition of social capital. These difficulties were acknowledged but it was agreed that further effort was worth making at this stage.

## **ITEM 5: UPDATE ON COUNTRY PARTICIPATION**

### **Report on UK feasibility study**

25. Mr John Canlin reported on the feasibility study commissioned by the UK education Departments and undertaken by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). He emphasised that he was reporting the issues raised by ONS on the basis of interviews with a range of interested parties and not any final judgement by the UK on ILSS or any final decision about participation of the UK in ILSS.

26. There was disappointment among some officials about the reduction in the range of skills to be measured in ILSS and a corresponding concern that a survey that provided little more than an update on national estimates of literacy levels would be too early to evaluate recent policy initiatives. The measure of numeracy would be of interest but only if results on a major UK survey could be equated to the same scale. The restriction of problem solving to analytical reasoning was seen to be a weakness as was the limitation of the measures of teamwork and ICT literacy to indirect assessment since both were judged to be important domains. There was a concern that these indirect measures would add little to what is already known, at least in the domain of ICT literacy. Mr. Canlin noted, however, that respondents to the ONS survey had generally been assuming that the indirect measures would be self reports of skill levels and not the behavioural measures now being proposed.

27. There was also concern about the level of participation, particularly the absence of some countries with which the UK would be most interested in making comparisons.

28. Costs were also a concern. The fact that the number of scales to be measured directly had been reduced from seven to four without any corresponding reduction in sample size and cost was a surprise. Mr Canlin acknowledged that the explanation was now known to be the extra time required for the problem solving assessment but said that this could prove less compelling in the UK where there was less interest in a measure of analytical reasoning than in the originally proposed more general measure of problem solving.

29. The UK acknowledged that a less stringent quality assurance programme could reduce costs but would argue strongly against that on the grounds that what is proposed is specific, detailed and desirable. There was concern, however, that the international overheads could blow out and result in additional charges to participating countries.

30. The report suggested that the following conditions would increase the value of the survey to the UK:

- a greater range of countries participating (a view based on the assumption that only three had signed on;
- a fuller range of skills tested, including ICT skills and writing;
- better discrimination at the lower end of the scales (level 1 on the IALS literacy scales);
- smaller sample size, simpler assessment rotation and lower costs;
- a mechanism for controlling international costs, such as a contract between countries and the international centre;
- access to scaling methodology to permit linking of the ILSS results to those of national surveys.

31. In response, Professor Tuijnman reported that writing had been considered as one of the skills to be assessed but dropped on the grounds that 50 minutes of testing time would be required to obtain reliable assessment and that it would be very difficult to achieve consistent scoring across different languages and cultures.

32. On the issue of increased differentiation at the lower end of the performance scale, Mr. Murray advised that work was underway to break the current level 1 into levels 1a and 1b. He pointed out that the literacy scales are based on a theory about what makes reading difficult that is sufficiently strong to yield good predictions of the difficulties of tasks. In turn, it also enables the creation of well-defined, broad levels of performance in bands along the scale. To achieve better discrimination among performances at the level 1, additional testing focused at that level will be probably be necessary but worthwhile only for individuals likely to be at that level. The possibility of doing this is currently being investigated. The strategy involves using the first items as a screen to determine whether a respondent should continue with the current form of the test for an assessment from 1b or 2 to 5 or take a different set of questions focused at level 1 to discriminate between 1a and 1b. Mr Murray said that work to date indicates that the strategy could work satisfactorily.

33. On the scope of the problem solving test, Mr. Murray said that the desire to have a broad assessment was shared but that, after the investment of considerable funds in exploring alternatives, the International Management Team had concluded that an assessment of analytical reasoning was all that could reasonably be offered at this stage.

34. On the question of the utility of follow-up data on adult literacy, Mr. Murray observed that, in Canada, the 1994 survey had not revealed the impact of specific literacy programmes. He suggested that a realistic goal of a schedule of surveys would be to reveal changes in the distribution of skills (due, for example, to skill attrition among older workers or to different levels of skills in a new generation of younger workers) and changes in the underlying covariance structure of the set of skills. These changes are best detected through a proper longitudinal study but that requires recruitment of the same sample on successive occasions. They can, however, also be addressed using a synthetic cohort analysis with cross-sectional data sets obtained on two or more occasions.

**Status of country participation**

35. Representatives offered the following reports on the status of current consideration of participation in their countries:

Austria	possible	detailed planning study has been financed and commenced to prepare a study design for submission to Statistics Canada;
Canada	yes	
Czech Republic	uncertain	additional information from this meeting will be useful, finance is a major problem;
Denmark	possible	proposal to join being submitted to Ministers, requirements of tender process for appointment of national survey team may make it difficult to meet early international survey deadlines;
Finland	possible	awaiting final decision of the Minister of Education and seeking support from other Ministries;
France	no	wishes to maintain contact with project, national statistics office (INSEE) undertaking independent work to develop capacity to work in the domain of skills surveys;
Hungary	interested	vocational education and training authorities are supportive, co-operating with Ministry of Family and Social Affairs, costs an issue but, if joining, would seek to do additional national work on problem solving, ICT skills and teamwork;
Italy	possible	decision could be made in about one month once some reorganisation of key national agency is completed;
Luxembourg	possible	organisation is in place except for establishment of structure to conduct a household survey, funding not yet finalised but expects to participate;
Norway	yes	
Portugal	no	ruled out on basis of cost in the first instance;
Slovak Republic	interested	now making first contact with project and examining requirements and benefits of participation;
Sweden	yes	tasks assigned and work begun in October 1999;
Switzerland	yes	undertaking all preparatory work though funding not yet finalised;
United Kingdom	possible	very interested but wondered if timing of survey could be delayed or if a second round at a later stage might be available;
United States	yes	committed to a National Adult Literacy Survey that will be linked to ILSS.

**ITEM 6: REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL ADULT LITERACY SURVEY**

36. Mr. Patrick Werquin presented a brief report on progress with the Second International Adult Literacy Survey (SIALS) in which a further eight countries have been involved and in which Switzerland

was extending the coverage of the survey to its Italian speaking population. The report, due for completion and release by June 2000, will present the results for 20 countries.

## ITEM 7: COSTS

37. Mr. Murray addressed the issue of costs, commenting first on national costs. These are driven primarily by sample size and the length of the survey. He said that the data needed to yield both reliable estimates on each scale and a reliable variance-covariance matrix among the measures in each country. For the scales proposed for ILSS, the requirement would be national samples of 7000.

38. The question of the impact of different national languages on sample size was raised. Mr. Murray said that the impact depended on the national intention. In Canada, where each participant is allowed to choose the language for assessment and it is assumed that there are no differences between the language groups, the national sample will need to be 7000. In Switzerland, where separate estimates are obtained for each language group, there will need to be a sample of 7000 for each language.

39. On the costs of international overheads, Mr. Murray said that the estimates were well informed because they were based on known costs for IALS. He reported that international costs over the three rounds of IALS had been:

	<u>Fee charged</u>	<u>Actual costs</u>
IALS Round 1	\$US25 000 per country	\$US250 000 per country
IALS Round 2	\$US50 000 per country	\$US150 000 per country
SIALS	\$US75 000 per country	\$US75 000 per country

40. For ILSS, Mr. Murray advised that the international overhead would need to be \$US300 000 per country, of which \$US150 000 would be for data cleaning, analysis and reporting and \$150 000 for management and quality assurance. On the issue of quality assurance, he emphasised that a lesson of IALS had been that this is very important. The major difficulties encountered in the various rounds of IALS were, in his view, to do with sample design and data collection and not psychometrics. Another factor in the cost increase from IALS would be an improvement in the translation processes.

## ITEM 8: POSSIBLE CHANGE OF NAME OF SURVEY

41. The International Management Team proposed a change of name from International Life Skills Survey (ILSS) to either International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) or International Adult Literacy Survey Plus (IALS+). Three considerations had given rise to this proposal. One was a desire to retain an emphasis on literacy. The second was a desire to claim less about the scope of the survey now that the number of direct measures would be reduced. The third was a concern that 'life skills' were interpreted, in some countries, as very low level skills in which a small proportion of adults needed special training.

42. In the discussion, one group (Italy, US) supported a restriction in title on the basis of 'truth in advertising' to better reflect the more limited scope of the survey as now proposed, both preferring IALS+ to IALSS. Others (Hungary, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden) preferred the current ILSS either on the grounds of a desire to have 'life skills' in the title or on the grounds that the name should signal the long term intentions and not just the current scope.

43. Some other options were also proposed - International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (IALLSS), International Survey of Literacy and Life Skills (ISLLS) - but the final choice was left to the International Management Team.

**ITEM 9: NEXT STEPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ILSS**

44. The important next steps for countries wishing to continue to participate in the survey are:

27-29 March 2000	Meeting in Ottawa to finalise the design of the Background Questionnaire
February - April 2000	Submission of a planning study to Statistics Canada for an assessment of the adequacy of the design and procedures for the national data collection
1 June 2000	Deadline for countries to declare their intention to participate in the ILSS, data gathering in 2002
4 June 2000	Meeting of National Study Managers (venue to be determined)
January-March 2001	Pilot testing of all survey instruments with samples of 1300 in order to get data on all components of instruments as a basis for selection of the components for the final forms.
January-June 2002	Main survey administration with samples of 7000.
Other dates in the schedule of developments for the study are:	
January-June 2000	Development of draft assessment materials for inclusion in the pilot testing in 2001.
July-December 2000	Translation of all assessment materials into all languages required for the first round.

45. The Management Team was reminded of its commitment recorded in para 29 of the Minutes of the previous PAG meeting to prepare “a policy rationale for participation [in ILSS], indicating the kinds of policy issues for which ILSS results would be relevant, and including a rationale for the required sample size”. Mr Murray advised that the work had not been completed by a consultant commissioned to prepare it, although a substantial part had been drafted. He offered to make available what had been prepared to date and to ensure that the whole was completed expeditiously.

**ITEM 10: TOWARDS A LONGTERM FUTURE FOR SURVEYS OF ADULT COMPETENCIES**

46. Mr McGaw noted that OECD surveys of skills have developed in two different ways. IALS represents one. This international survey was built upon substantial prior work in the US and Canada that had produced the assessment frameworks for the three literacy measures and had produced tests to fit those frameworks. For the international extension of that work, new tests were developed with items produced to fit the framework by the various countries planning to participate. ILSS is another survey with a similar origin in substantial work undertaken in member countries (again the US and Canada) then made available as the basis of international work. Obvious benefits in this approach are that countries are offered the opportunity to join an activity with something of an established track record and that costs for joining countries are reduced by the extent of investment by the initiating countries. The potential disadvantage for countries joining is that there are limits to their capacity to influence the design of the survey.

47. The other approach to international surveys of skills is represented by the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA). This project has been designed collaboratively by those countries that have chosen to participate. In the early stages this was fewer than half of the OECD member countries but, by the time the project tender had been let and work was beginning, all had joined. The obvious benefit of this approach is that countries all have the opportunity to shape the direction of the project, including the overall framework and the framework for individual assessment domains, and not only to submit test items to fit established frameworks. A potential disadvantage for some is that costs are then fully shared and not underwritten by a smaller number of countries playing a leading role.

48. Mr. McGaw pointed out that these two approaches are not as different as the descriptions might suggest. Collaborative projects like PISA do not start *de novo*. They build on earlier work and they inevitably draw on many of the same experts since the pools of expertise in test development, psychometrics, survey design and data analysis are finite. The framework for the reading tests in PISA, for example, has the same basis as that used in IALS though it has been extended in PISA to include more interpretative forms of reading. The psychometric models used in IALS and PISA are similar and the survey designs differ only because one is a school-based survey, with the sample clustered in schools, and the other a household survey. Furthermore, as PISA extends its coverage of cross-curricular competencies, it will move closer to the central domains of interest for adult surveys like ILSS.

49. Looking ahead, beyond the 2002 ILSS survey, Mr. McGaw suggested that there would be a continuing interest in OECD countries in surveys of adult competencies. He referred to the work of the Swiss/US project on the Definition and Selection of Competencies (DeSeCo) being undertaken as part of OECD's education indicators programme, INES. From a theoretical base, this project is seeking to conceptualise the domain of competencies in a way that has relevance for the future development of PISA. As this work then seeks to move towards more practical applications it has the potential to influence both PISA and any future surveys of adult competencies.

50. Mr. McGaw also drew attention to the INES General Assembly, to be held in Tokyo in September 2000, at which future directions for the indicator work will be considered. He suggested that priority is likely to be given to continuation and extension of surveys of adult competence. He noted that some countries that have chosen not to participate in ILSS have commended the PISA management and ownership model as the basis for work on adult competencies as well.

51. Looking beyond the 2002 ILSS data collection, Mr. McGaw suggested that a new round of surveys of adult competencies could be established, managed through a Board of Participating Countries and conducted by an external agent or consortium under contract entered into after a tendering process. This would be to adopt the PISA consensual model rather than the IALS/ILSS model of most countries capitalising on a prior initiative of a few but that work could build on ILSS in whatever way the Board of Participating Countries wanted. Mr. McGaw pointed out that the later rounds of IALS had each capitalised on lessons learned in earlier rounds, that ILSS was capitalising on lessons learned in IALS and that PISA had similarly taken advantage of lessons learned in prior international surveys of the achievements of school students. He said that, while the extent and nature of the use of ILSS experience in further surveys of adult competencies would be a matter for a Board of Participating Countries to determine, it could be expected that ILSS would provide an important part of the base on which further surveys would build. Furthermore, countries participating in ILSS would acquire valuable experience and knowledge that would facilitate their management and participation in any future surveys of adult competencies. He also emphasised that the timeline for the collaborative development of any future surveys would mean that they would be well beyond the 2002 data collection for ILSS.

## **ITEM 11: DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

52. It was resolved not to set a date for the next meeting of the Project Advisory Group. The 1 June 2000 deadline for countries to sign on to participate in ILSS would be followed by a 4 June 2000 meeting of National Survey Managers who would take forward the technical and administrative matters requiring attention. It was suggested that the next Project Advisory Group meeting be held in late 2000 or even delayed until 2001.